SECTION C - DESCRIPTION/SPECIFICATIONS/WORK STATEMENT

C.1 STATEMENT OF WORK/SPECIFICATIONS

The contractor shall furnish the necessary personnel, material, equipment, cell phones, pagers, services and facilities (except as otherwise specified), in performance of the following Statement of Work/Specifications.

C.1.1 BACKGROUND

The mission of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) is to administer the laws and regulations related to patents and trademarks in order to promote industrial and technical progress in the United States and strengthen the national economy. The USPTO carries out its mission by examining patent and trademark applications, issuing patents and registering trademarks, disseminating patent and trademark information to the public, and by encouraging a domestic and international climate in which intellectual property can flourish.

The USPTO is operating under a Congressional mandate to implement state-of-the-art computer data and information retrieval systems in support of virtually all aspects of its operations.

The USPTO is aggressively pursuing the design, development and implementation of new automated systems and the refinement of existing systems that will provide automated support to the application processing and examination functions, and dissemination of patent and trademark information to the public. If the USPTO is to be ready to meet the challenges brought on by the increases in application filings, it must meet tight deadlines for its system design and development activities.

The USPTO is supported by an information technology (IT) infrastructure (foundation) of hardware, system software, and network communications that have been deployed in support of the mission of the USPTO. The IT infrastructure provides access to application systems and office automation tools used in the performance of the work processes. The USPTO's highest level of management has placed an extremely high priority on providing consistent, available, and reliable network and data processing services. Also inherent in this process is providing for the expansion of services and capabilities. During the FY2004 to FY2008 time frame, significant growth is expected to occur.

Rapid delivery of automated systems will require upgrading USPTO's development infrastructure, software processes, and methodology. Currently, USPTO is piloting an iterative lifecycle for developing automated systems. The USPTO Enterprise Architecture (EA) is evolving and strategies for implementing a component architecture and component based development are being pursued, including the Rational Enterprise Suite. Software Release Management concepts are being explored to promote scheduled releases of system enhancements and fixes.

As USPTO system development methodologies, processes, and strategies evolve, new SW development tools will be adopted to support these changes. The Configuration Management System (CMS) is currently based upon Merant PVCS Dimensions, but USPTO is piloting the use of Clearcase and Clearquest to support iterative development and software component reuse and to facilitate a distributed development environment, The USPTO current suite of testing tools includes Mercury Interactive TestDirector, WinRunner, and LoadRunner.

The automated systems under development are complex in scope and far-reaching in application, both within and outside the USPTO. Successful implementation is largely dependent upon the collective efforts of a staff of diverse technical specialists able to quickly respond to the many variables and conditions, which accompany a design and deployment effort of this proportion. It is neither practical nor cost-effective, however, to fully staff all of these specialties in-house on a permanent, long-term basis because the need is intermittent and short-term.

C.1.2 PURPOSE

The role of the ITPA contractor will be to serve in the capacity of an independent and objective source for expertise in independent testing and assessment of application and infrastructure components, quality management, and configuration management.

C.2 SCOPE OF CONTRACT

The contractor will perform independent information technology product assurance activities in support of the design, development, and implementation of new automated systems, enhancement of existing systems, and designing and implementing changes to the infrastructure that will provide support to the patent and trademark application processing and examination functions, USPTO management and administrative systems, and dissemination of patent and trademark information to the public.

Technical efforts will include, but are not limited to, independent testing and assessment, quality assessment and metrics, and configuration management support. Support shall be supplied in conformance with the terms and conditions of this contract.

C.2.1 ORDERING

The support services furnished under this contract may be ordered only by the USPTO's Contracting Officer by the issuance of a written task order for each task to be performed in accordance with the ordering procedures detailed in Section B herein, and all other terms and conditions of the contract.

C.3 SCOPE OF WORK

Major areas where the contractor will provide expert technical support and assistance include, but are not limited to: independent testing and assessment, quality management, and configuration management.

The contractor will work with government staff and staff from other contractors in the performance of the work.

The following subsections discuss each of these areas in more detail. The USPTO Contracting Officer (CO) will unilaterally issue specific task assignments under these areas in writing.

C.3.1 INDEPENDENT TESTING AND ASSESSMENT

The contractor will perform tests of business area software applications and information technology infrastructure development efforts independently of their developers to verify that functional and non-functional, requirements are correctly and completely implemented. Testers who are independent of the AIS project perform all testing within the scope of this contract. This testing includes Formal Qualification Testing (FQT), and System Compatibility Testing (SCT). FQT tests the system against the stated business area requirements to ensure that those requirements are satisfied, FQT addresses system functional requirements, as well as, non-functional requirements such as system performance, scalability, and availability. SCT is conducted to ensure that new or changed software does not cause conflicts with the desktop software baselines. Security Test and Evaluation (ST&E) is conducted as part of the overall Certification and Accreditation process to ensure the security of AISs. Additionally, independent testing encompasses testing for Section 508 (Accessibility) compliance.

USPTO's current standard testing toolset consists of Mercury Interactive's software TestDirector, WinRunner, and LoadRunner. The contractor will provide expertise to support the USPTO's implementation of the testing toolset and other testing support tools, as required.

Independent testing and assessment supports applications and infrastructure development and maintenance. Testing activities include planning and conducting tests; and developing test plans, test specifications and test procedures, and test reports in accordance with the USPTO's Life Cycle Management for Automated Systems Standard and the Technical Reference Model. Independent testing and assessment begins early in the life cycle. Testers gather user requirements (from the Requirements Traceability Matrix) and design information (from the published design documents) necessary for planning testing and developing test documents. Test scripts are documented as "Test Procedures" so they may be reused later to test maintenance changes. Independent testing and assessment is a preventive function that ensures that a system will function properly and attempts to find the discrepancies (or "bugs") in a new or revised system prior to its deployment. This is an essential element of the independence of the product assurance function in the UPSTO system life cycle.

Independent testing encompasses software applications both custom-built and commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) software, as well as implementation of infrastructure technologies such as operating systems, network services and client-server architecture.

C.3.2 QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND METRICS

The contractor will perform the enterprise quality management (not testing) function activities in support of business area and infrastructure automated information system. The QA activities are a disciplined set of techniques for planning, reviewing, and measuring processes, and products to ensure that they are acceptable to the business area and the CIO. Enterprise Quality management is the set of support activities (including quality management, process management, measurement analysis, and facilitation) needed to provide adequate confidence that processes are established and continuously improved in order to produce products that meet specifications and are fit for use. Enterprise Quality management is a set of management techniques, organizational principles, technical methodologies, and administrative procedures intended to improve the process used to develop, enhance, and maintain software systems. Quality management improves project coordination, increases management visibility, furthers implementation of standardized life cycle processes, and reviews system products to ensure that they are of acceptable quality to the business areas and the Chief Information Officer (CIO). Quality Management is oriented toward prevention and is not testing. The goal of the quality management program is to design quality into all aspects of system development projects.

The quality management function addresses many business needs. The initial focus at USPTO is on quality assessment. Enterprise Quality assessment activities include evaluating the quality of products (throughout the development life cycle); evaluating the robustness of the processes by which the products were developed and the effectiveness of the people/resources applied to a given project; providing consultation on the life cycle technical standards and guidelines and industry practices; analyzing, collecting, and developing metrics; providing decision making support through trend analysis, impact analysis, causal analysis and defect analysis; performing root cause analysis; conducting client satisfaction and other surveys; improving system quality through the use of peer reviews, code reviews, inspections and audits; ensuring that technical reviews are held and tracking the resulting action items; collecting lessons learned to assist future projects; reviewing and inspecting developers' work products for defects; and verifying that discovered defects are corrected. Quality assessment is performed in the then existent environment which today includes COOL:GEN, RUP, Rational Development, and WebSphere technology, all within an Enterprise Architecture framework.

The USPTO is planning to develop a metrics program, including software metrics and performance metrics, among others.

Quality management is responsible for assuring that there is an initial definition of quality, that quality is being measured, and that quality is continuously improving.

Quality management is an information technology infrastructure function that supports all business areas as well as information technology infrastructure projects.

C.3.3 CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT

The contractor will perform configuration management (CM) function activities in support of business area and infrastructure automated information system (AIS) development, maintenance, testing, and operation activities. Specifically, the configuration management program includes: storing computer program code and documentation and other information for reuse reference and archiving; managing changes; and verifying that the organization's systems can be recreated. The USPTO's configuration management program implements integrated, professional, industry standard disciplines to improve project coordination, increases quality and efficiency by implementing standard processes supported by standard tools, and increases management visibility and control of the USPTO s information technology. The goals of the CM program are traceability, accountability, maintainability and replicability so that accurate materials are available for the developers and so that complete systems are available for production use. The CM program is critical to successful transition by providing materials from which the system development and maintenance managers and contractors can maintain and enhance AISs. USPTO's current standard CM tool is PVCS Dimensions, and the contractor will provide expertise to support the USPTO's implementation of PVCS Dimensions and other CM support tools as required.

Configuration management activities include, but are not limited to: (1) loading AIS software and documentation appropriately into the CM tool; (2) performing software configuration management builds to recreate the AIS for Formal Qualifications Testing, production, and deployment; (3) establishing baselines and creating releases; (4) providing and supporting the operation of a software repository in which developers can search, enabling business area and CIO management to track and control all versions of and changes to AISs; (5) providing classroom and individual training and technical assistance for using standard configuration management processes and tools; (6) writing configuration management plans; and (7) operating a configuration management library.

A distinction between Enterprise and AIS project configuration management is made to place control of configuration management activities and decision-making authority at the appropriate levels. Enterprise-level configuration management functions performed by the contractor will support the USPTO's role as integrator with the system development and maintenance (SDM) contracts, enabling the USPTO to transfer AIS development and maintenance functions between SDM contractors as part of the managed competition for SDM task orders.

The contractor will perform CM functions to centralize management of all AIS components including software (applications, systems, COTS, test materials, etc.), hardware, and documentation. These activities include, but are not limited to, creating part structures in the Configuration Management System (CMS) and loading items into CMS, gathering information about parts and items and loading this CM data into CMS,

and monitoring the completeness and correctness of this data. The standard CM tool supports relationships between components to ensure that when a change is made to one component the other related components are also changed, such that the documentation matches the product. This approach supports maintainability, provides impact analysis capabilities and makes reuse feasible. The contractor will input links among related components and change documents and will monitor the accuracy and completeness of links input by AIS developers and maintainers.

The standard CM tool provides a repository of and change control over all data under its control. The CM system makes it possible to make all applications accessible from desktop workstations. Configuration management provides responsive day-to-day support to developers while reducing the risk that unauthorized changes are made to production systems. Configuration management supports a comprehensive retrieval capability for both stored and referenced components via listings and queries of information collected about each component. The contractor will create and take action on PVCS change documents in accordance with USPTO plans and procedures, monitor developers' use of change documents and the change process.

The contractor will perform configuration audits. Configuration audits are key program events conducted to determine whether configuration documentation accurately describes the hardware and software being developed or produced. Two types of audits will be performed: functional and physical. The functional audit verifies that an AIS's configuration items and the system's performance and functionality is compliant with specifications and is performed in conjunction with formal qualifications testing. The physical configuration audit establishes the product baseline for the hardware and software configuration items, and is a formal physical examination of those configuration items. The physical configuration audit verifies that the contents of the CM repository' are the same as AISs in production.

The contractor will assist the USPTO in administering PVCS Dimensions Tool administration support will include, but not be limited to, creating accounts, assigning user permissions, troubleshooting user problems, and monitoring data base performance. The contractor will recommend product structure and workset changes to improve performance, will recommend control plan changes consistent with USPTO's policy and environment, and will implement standard CM tool upgrades and enhancements. The contractor will operate a CM library; services provided by the CM library will include checking in and checking out COTS and other media and maintaining a library index in PVCS Dimensions.

The contractor will write and maintain the Enterprise and AIS project CM plans, provide input to the USPTO CM Technical Standard and Guideline (TSG), produce and maintain LCM documentation for USPTO's configuration management system such as training materials, production installation plans and operational support plans, and present CM training to AIS developers, contractors, and operations staff and review LCM documents for other systems which have interfaces to CM.

C.3.4 SUPPORT TO REVIEW BOARDS

The contractor supports the evolution of an AIS through its life cycle via the Technical Review Board and other groups as delegated. These forums review and determine the disposition of changes, assign changes to releases, manage groupings or change work packages and review solutions. The contractor will provide secretariat support for the Technical Review Board (TRB) and other groups and develop and produce periodic reports from PVCS Dimensions for analysis and to track performance measures. USPTO s configuration management tool will centralize change management functions reducing dependence on contractor support and providing decision-making support through trend analysis, impact analysis, causal analysis defect identification/prevention and other analytic or statistical tools.

C.4 QUALIFICATIONS OF CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL

C.4.1 GENERAL PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

The contractor must have personnel with a working knowledge of microcomputer applications on an IBM or compatible PC. This knowledge shall include operating in a Windows NT 4.x environment using Microsoft Office. The preferred applications are the Microsoft Office suite.

The contractor is expected to provide trained, knowledgeable technical personnel according to the requirements of the task order. Therefore, the USPTO will not provide or pay for training, conferences, or seminars to be given to contractor personnel in order for them to perform their tasks, with the exception of USPTO-specific and specialized training not obtainable outside the USPTO (e.g., patent examination process class). If it is determined during the performance of the task order that training, conferences, or seminars not specified in the task order are required, only the Contracting Officer may approve the training.

All contractor personnel, including, but not limited to key personnel, who interface with USPTO management and technical personnel, must have excellent oral and written communication skills. “Excellent oral and written communication skills” is defined as the capability to converse fluently, communicate effectively, and write intelligibly in the English language.

C.4.1.2 LABOR CATEGORIES

The contractor shall supply personnel meeting the qualifications specified for each labor category. Below is a listing of the labor categories that the USPTO considers necessary under the scope of this contract. As necessary, additional labor categories may be added in order to fulfill staffing requirements under the scope of this contract.

Program Manager

Test Specialist
- Principle Test Specialist
- Senior Test Specialist
- Junior Test Specialist

Quality Assurance Specialist
- Principle QA Specialist
- Senior QA Specialist
- Junior QA Specialist

Configuration Management Specialist
- Principle Conf. Mgmt. Specialist
- Senior Conf. Mgmt. Specialist
- Junior Conf. Mgmt. Specialist

Tech Writer/Editor

Admin/Clerical Support

The exact mix needed across all years of the contract cannot be precisely predicted.

C.4.1.3 KEY PERSONNEL

Key personnel shall include:

1. Program Manager
2. Principal Test Specialist
3. Principal Configuration Management Specialist
4. Principal Quality Assurance Specialist

All key personnel must have at least 3 years experience managing work similar to that of this contract in their respective area.

C.4.2 SPECIFIC PERSONNEL QUALIFICATIONS

The following labor categories and functional requirements have been provided for evaluation purposes. Please note that the titles of these categories are illustrative only. It is not required that the contractor provide personnel with these exact titles; rather, personnel shall meet the requirements listed below.

C.4.2.1 PROGRAM MANAGER (KEY PERSONNEL)

General Description

An individual who is extremely knowledgeable and skilled in managing substantial contract support services involving multiple projects and personnel. Demonstrates very good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Shall be responsible for the overall contract performance and shall not serve in any other capacity under this contract. Organizes, plans, directs, staffs, and coordinates the overall program effort; manages contract and subcontract activities as the authorized interface with the Contracting Officer, COTR, Government management personnel, and customer agency representatives; ensures compliance with Federal rules and regulations. Shall have demonstrated communications skills with all levels of management. Establishes and alters (as necessary) management structure to effectively direct contract support activities. Meets and confers with USPTO management and technical personnel regarding the status of specific contractor activities and problems, issues, or conflicts requiring resolution. Shall be capable of negotiating and making binding decisions for the company. May work as a team member.

C.4.2.2 PRINCIPAL TEST SPECIALIST (KEY PERSONNEL)

General Description

An individual who is extremely knowledgeable and skilled in all aspects of information systems. Demonstrates very good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides competent leadership and highly specialized and technical guidance in the testing and assessment of complex systems. Simultaneously plans, manages and provides technical oversight for independent testing and assessment activities. Ensures tested components are compliant with standards and requirements. Directs completion of tasks within estimated time frames and budget constraints. Schedules and assigns duties to subordinates and formulates and enforces work standards. Coordinates with the Program Manager to ensure problem resolution and customer satisfaction. May work as a team member Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including but not limited to the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representative Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives. May be capable of negotiating and making binding decisions for the company on contract task orders.

C.4.2.3 SENIOR TEST SPECIALIST

General Description

An individual who is very knowledgeable and skilled in all aspects of information systems and is proficient in the use of USPTO's standard testing toolset. Demonstrates very good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides highly specialized and technical guidance in the testing and assessment of complex systems. Ensures systems are compliant with standards and requirements. May work as a team member Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including, but not limited to the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representative Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives. In addition to being proficient in the use of USPTO's standard testing toolset, provides guidance to other contractors and Government representatives on the use of the USPTO's standard testing toolset.

C.4.2.4 JUNIOR TEST SPECIALIST

General Description

An individual who is knowledgeable and has experience in information systems and is proficient in the use of USPTO's standard testing toolset. Demonstrates good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides specialized and technical solutions to the independent testing and assessment of complex systems. Typically required to work under the close supervision and direction of senior personnel. Works independently or as a member of a team. May interface with Government management and technical personnel including but not limited to the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives. Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives.

C.4.2.5 PRINCIPAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST (KEY PERSONNEL)

General Description

An individual who is extremely knowledgeable and skilled in all aspects of information systems and Quality Management (not testing), and demonstrates very good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides competent leadership, and highly specialized and technical guidance to complex system quality management challenges. Simultaneously plans, manages, and provides technical oversight for quality management activities. Ensures systems are compliant with standards and requirements. Directs completion of tasks within estimated time frames and budget constraints. Schedules and assigns duties to subordinates and formulates and enforces work standards. Coordinates with the Program Manager to ensure problem resolution and customer satisfaction. May work as a team member performing QA activities. Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including, but not limited to the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representative. Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives. May be capable of negotiating and making binding decisions for the company on contract task orders.

C.4.2.6 SENIOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

General Description

An individual who is very knowledgeable and skilled in all aspects of information systems and Quality Management (not testing). Demonstrates very good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides highly specialized and technical guidance to complex system quality management challenges. Ensures systems are compliant with standards and requirements. Works as a team member performing QA activities but may also work independently. Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including but not limited to the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representative. Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives.

C.4.2.7 JUNIOR QUALITY MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

General Description

An individual who is knowledgeable and has experience in information systems and Quality Management (not testing). Demonstrates good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides specialized and technical solutions to the quality management of complex systems. Works as a team member performing QA activities. Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including but not limited to the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives. Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives.

C.4.2.8 PRINCIPAL CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST (KEY PERSONNEL)

General Description

An individual who is extremely knowledgeable and skilled in all aspects of information systems. Demonstrates very good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides competent leadership and highly specialized and technical guidance to complex system configuration management challenges. Simultaneously plans, manages and provides technical oversight for configuration management activities. Ensures systems are compliant with standards and requirements. Directs completion of tasks within estimated time frames and budget constraints. Schedules and assigns duties to subordinates and formulates and enforces work standards. Coordinates with the Program Manager to ensure problem resolution and customer satisfaction. May work as a team member Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including but not limited to the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representative Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives. May be capable of negotiating and making binding decisions for the company on contract task orders.

C.4.2.9 SENIOR CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

General Description

An individual who is very knowledgeable and skilled in all aspects of information systems. Demonstrates very good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides highly specialized and technical guidance to complex system configuration management challenges. Ensures systems are compliant with standards and requirements. May work as a team member. Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including, but not limited to,

the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representative. Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives.

C.4.2.10 JUNIOR CONFIGURATION MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

General Description

An individual who is knowledgeable and has experience in information systems. Demonstrates good oral and written communications skills.

Function

Provides specialized and technical solutions to the configuration management of complex systems. May work as a team member. Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including, but not limited to, the Contracting Officer and Contracting Officer's Technical Representatives. Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives.

C.4.2.11 TECHNICAL WRITER/EDITOR

General Description

An individual who is extremely knowledgeable and skilled in technical documentation and presentation techniques, to include technical writing, technical proofreading, and technical editing. Demonstrates excellent command and articulation of the English language. Has superior grammatical skills and ability to use automated editing and publishing tools.

Function

Assists in collecting and organizing information required for preparation of deliverables; ensures the use of proper technical terminology; performs technical writing, editing, proofreading, and integration of computer-based material to produce document deliverables; and translates technical information into clear, readable documents to be used by technical and non-technical personnel. May work as a team member. Interfaces with Government management and technical personnel including, but not limited to, the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative. Reports in writing and orally to Government contract management personnel and other Government representatives.

C.4.2.12 ADMINISTRATIVE/CLERICAL STAFF

General Description

An individual knowledgeable in computer-based documentation and presentation techniques, technical typing, and word processing. Demonstrates excellent command and articulation of the English language.

Function

Supports the development of all contract deliverables, to include the preparation of documentation to be furnished as deliverable(s). Provides administrative support such as technical typing, editing of word processing and other computer manuscripts, integration of various sources into a cohesive product which will be delivered as computer-based magnetic media, preparation of graphical and narrative presentation material. Works as part of a team.

C.5 EFFECTIVE PERIOD OF THIS CONTRACT

The period of performance (POP) for this contract will be five years – a base year starting at the effective date of contract award, followed by four (4) optional years.

C.6 CONTRACT TYPE/ISSUANCE OF TASK ORDERS

The contract type will be performance based.

C.7 PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

The work under this contract is to be performed primarily at the contractor's facility (unless otherwise specified in a task order). The contractor will have network access to the USPTO networks and access to specified databases as necessary to perform the tasking.

C.8 PROBLEM NOTIFICATION

The contractor shall notify the USPTO's Contracting Officer and COTR immediately of all problems that impact or potentially impact the contract, deliverable(s), or project schedule. Such notifications shall be made verbally during normal work hours or at the beginning of the next Government workday. For each problem encountered, verbal notification shall be followed by a written report to the Contracting Officer and copy to the COTR within 24 hours after the identification of the problem. This written report shall be submitted in accordance with the format and criteria contained in the Problem Notification Letter (Contract Deliverable No. PN01), provided in Attachment J.2.A.5.

The report shall include at a minimum:

1. The nature of the problem

2. How or why the problem occurred

3. The steps being taken to correct the problem

4. The consequences of the problem

5. Actions to prevent similar occurrences.

C.9 PROGRESS REPORTS

The contractor shall submit written monthly progress and status reports 10 calendar days after the end of each calendar month. The contractor shall prepare and submit ten (10) copies to the Government, nine (9) copies shall be provided to the COTR and one (1) copy to the Contracting Officer. A progress report will contain, at a minimum, the following items:

1. A summary of progress made during the month of each task and subtask initiated, under way, and completed.

2. A comparison of progress made with the plans for each task and subtask.

3. A summary of planned activities to be conducted during the next month on each task or subtask that is active or to be initiated.

4. A summary of staff hours and funds expended during the month, expended to date, and remaining for each task and the total project.

5. A description of major difficulties that have been encountered which may delay task completion or product delivery, and statements of the steps to be taken to solve the problem.

If there are no problems, all monthly progress reports shall include written statements, as follows, certifying to the absence of progress problem:

1. "The contractor hereby certifies that it recognizes no problems which affected progress during the current reporting period."

2. "The contractor hereby certifies that it anticipates no problems will occur during the next reporting period."

The progress report shall be submitted in accordance with the format and criteria provided in the Monthly Status Report (Contract Deliverable No. FN01) included in Section J.2.A.1.

C.10 MEETINGS

The contractor shall conduct monthly Task Order Status Reviews with the USPTO's COTR or his/her representative. Subjects for discussion at the meetings shall include at a minimum; but are not limited to:

1. Work completed during the reporting period.

2. Technical status reports on all tasks.

3. Financial status reports on all tasks.

4. Work schedule for the next reporting period.

5. Identification of any problems or delays and recommendations as to their resolution with reference to the problem reports submitted in the interim.

The contractor shall make available all technical personnel associated with the project work areas which are related to the topics that are listed in the proposed agenda.

Other meetings between the contractor and the USPTO will be held on an "as required" basis during the performance of the contract. The majority of the meetings will be held at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, 2121 Crystal Drive (Crystal Park 2), Suite 1004, Arlington, VA 22202; however, meetings may also be held at the contractor's facility when determined appropriate by the COTR. The contractor shall be able to attend any meeting called by the USPTO when given a thirty (30) minute advance notice of such a meeting. As requested, the contractor shall prepare and submit written minutes of all meetings in accordance with the format and criteria contained in Minutes of Meetings (Contract Deliverable No. GD17), provided as Attachment J.2.A.6.

C.11 CONFLICT OF INTEREST (COI) MANAGEMENT PLAN

Thirty days after contract award, the contractor shall submit the initial Conflict of Interest (COI) Management Plan that specifically details and describes the internal corporate procedures that will be used to identify, avoid, mitigate, neutralize and correct actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest conditions or relationships. This will include COI on the part of or between the contractor and other individuals, businesses or firms, including contractors own corporate entities (parent, affiliates, subsidiaries), consultants, or subcontractors down to the second tier. The contractor must state the anticipated timeframe for correction of COI conditions/relationships should they be identified.

The Plan must specifically describe the internal procedures for detecting and reporting when conditions exist that could give rise to future development of conflict of interest, and how these conditions will be corrected to avoid full development of COI.

The contractor's COI Plans must meet the minimum standards contained in the "Minimum Standards for USPTO Contractors Conflict of Interest Plans" provided as Attachment J.2.A.9.

The contractor shall submit an updated COI Management Plan thirty days after the execution of each option year of the contract.